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THE

Song of the Exile

A CANADIAN EPIC

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THE SONG OF THE EXILE.

THE

SONG OF THE EXILE

A CANADIAN EPIC

Visions and Miscellaneous Poems

BY

WILFRED S. SKEATS

TORONTO

HART & COMPANY

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DEDICATION.

To Thee, whose cheering words have urged me on
When fainting heart advised me to stay
My halting pen, and leave my task undone:
To Thee, I humbly dedicate this lay.
Strong, womanly heart! whose long-enduring pain
Has not sufficed to rend thy faith in twain,
But rather teaches thee to sympathise
With those whose path through pain and darkness lies
Thyself forgetting, if but thou canst be
Of aid to others in adversity;
The helpful word, the approbative smile
From thee have ever greeted me, the while
None other cheered. Then let this tribute be
A token of my gratitude to Thee.

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THE

SONG OF THE EXILE.

A CANADIAN EPIC.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

Ye shores of England, as ye fast recede
The pain of parting rends my weary breast.
I must regret—yet there is little need
That I should mourn, for only wild unrest
Is mine while in my native land I roam.
Thou gav'st me birth, but cannot give a home.

II.

Yet happy were the days that have been mine,
So happy that those days must needs be few.
It could not be that that bright sun would shine
For many months, and while its light was new
The clouds arose, and, in one fated day,
The jealous storm had swept my joys away.

III.

That fated day, when I believed that all
The hopes that I had cherished in the past
Would be fulfilled, and I should fondly call
The being whom I loved my own at last:
Then fell the storm, and bursting on my head,
Still saved my body when my soul was dead.

IV.

I loved her dearly, and my heart was set
On winning her. My only aim in life
Was to secure her love, and so forget
The world beside—my world would be my wife.
I never loved another, her alone
I loved, and, loving, longed to call my own.

V.

The summer months were passed in tortured bliss.
My love had grown, but that it could not grow;
It all-enveloped me, and one sweet kiss
From her dear lips had made my bosom glow
With happiness; and many months of pain
Had been as nothing, that one kiss to gain.

VI.

And, when the many-tinted Autumn's reign
Succeeded Summer's more congenial sway,
I told her of the mingled joy and pain
That stirred my soul throughout each Summer's day.
And whispered, in emotion's softest tone,
The love that I had feared before to own.

VII.

She listened silently, then, sweetly shy,
She laid her gentle head upon my breast.
And, in the liquid depths of each blue eye,
I read the love her lips had not confessed ;
And quickly, fondly, pressed her to my heart,
Vowing that none should keep us two apart.

VIII.

Ah ! happy were the months that followed then,
The months that flew as rapidly as days ;
And sweet the stolen hours of meeting when
We listened to the nightingale's sad lays,
Or, seated on a rustic bench alone,
Forgot all else in glad communion.

IX.

I had not asked her father for her hand ;
He was a baronet of ancient blood.
Proud of his lineage, jealous of his land ;
His pride was such as boded me no good.
I was an author, not unknown to fame,
But could not boast a title to my name.

X.

Sore did my loved one beg me to confess
My love to him, and ask for his consent.
He loved her well, and could not fail to bless
Our union ; his pride had oft unbent
To her, and she had now but little fear
That he would hear me with a willing ear.

XI.

I gladly heard her speak in confident
And reassuring tones, and all the doubt
That had been mine now vanished, and I went,
With lightsome heart, to seek her father out ;
And prayed him give his daughter for my wife,
And thus confer a blessing on my life.

XII.

He heard me silently, nor did he speak
For full two minutes after I had ceased ;
Then, while his eye flashed, and his livid cheek
Betrayed his passion, was his tongue released ;
And, in vituperative tones, he swore
That I should never cross his threshold more.

XIII.

Was this my gratitude for patronage,
That I should thus inveigle his one daughter,
And seek to supplement my sorry wage
By the rich dowry that her marriage brought her ?
He was a baronet of ancient name ;
No parvenu his daughter's hand should claim.

XIV.

His words enraged me, but I checked my wrath
For her dear sake, whose love alone that fire
Could quench, and mildly arguments put forth
To soothe the baronet, and calm his ire.
But useless all the arguments I wove ;
In foaming rage he cursed me and my love.

XV.

What need to speak of all that next ensued?
Still constantly, throughout those weary days,
Impelled by hope, with fondest love imbued,
Did I renew my suit. By bold essays
I sought to win the baronet's consent—
Each day a wilder rage his bosom rent.

XVI.

He had forbidden me to see my Love;
But one glad morning I received a note
From her. She bade me meet her in the grove
Behind her father's house. In pain she wrote,
For, though the letter spoke no word of pain,
Her tears had left a sorrow-telling stain.

XVII.

We met at night-time; and her tear-stained face,
Upturned to mine, was sorrowful and pale.
I pressed her to me in a fond embrace,
And kissed the cheeks that told so sad a tale.
She sadly smiled, then spoke, her cheek bedewed,
The while, with bitter tears again renewed:

XVIII.

"My fondest Love, within this silent glen,
I bade thee come to say a last farewell.
Alas! my Love, we may not meet again,
For thou must leave me. Ah! I cannot tell
What pain was mine as on my knees I cried,
And begged my father to unbend his pride.

XIX.

"He will not hear me; nought that I can say
Will calm his wrath, but rather do my prayers
Increase his passion. Each recurring day,
When I would still importune him, he bears
A sterner aspect, and 'twere better now
That we should speak no more of this our vow.

XX.

"But leave thou me, and seek a foreign clime.
My father thus will think that thou hast lost
All hope of winning me. In one year's time
Return again; perhaps, by conscience tossed,
My father will repent his stern decree,
And gladly, as my husband, welcome thee."

XXI.

"Oh! fly thou with me, Love," I trembling cried,
"And—" but my loved one would not hear my cry:
"'Tis but a twelvemonth since my mother died,
And I should sin against my God if I
Should leave my father. Oh! my Love, seek not
To tempt me thus, but help me bear my lot."

XXII.

'Twere wrong to more persuade her. Silently
I kissed her gentle lips. A loving spell
Of sweet communion followed—it could be
But short—and then we bade a long farewell.
O'erwhelmed with tears, my gentle Love was gone,
And I must wander exiled and alone.

XXIII.

Yet is it best that I should wander thus,
Far from the cherished spot where we have passed
Such happy days, since not again for us
Will be the joy that seemed too great to last.
Her father is too stern a man to know
Remorse's sting; his hatred will but grow.

XXIV.

Each year my wandering feet shall hither stray,
  Each year my heart will feel the pang anew.
And this one thought alone will cheer my way,
  That she, my Love, is faithful still, and true.
Her father may forbid our union,
But still our hearts together beat as one.

XXV.

Lonely I stand, and silent gaze upon
  The fading shore, where dwells my soul's twin-soul.
'Midst my companions I am still alone,
  Less near to them than her, though billows roll
Between us two. Fast fades the distant strand.
Farewell my Love! Farewell my native Land!

XXVI.

England! dear land of liberty and peace,
  Great art thou now, and greater still wilt be,
If but thy truth and honesty increase
  As each revolving decade renders thee
In population greater. Let the name
Of Christian England fix thy future fame.

XXVII.

The tale is told that when a foreign king
Would know what pow'r thy gracious Queen possessed,
That she could rule, with might unfaltering,
Her people, and by them be ever blessed ;
She laid her hand upon a Bible near,
And, smiling, said : "That pow'r lies hidden here."

XXVIII.

Defender of the Faith we call our Queen,
And she has been that Faith's exemplar too.
Not all the ages of the past have seen
A sovereign more noble, pure, and true.
And she has kept, as well as monarch could,
Her childhood's promise : "Oh ! I will be good."

XXIX.

And not without the help of that great Book
Could she have kept the promise of her youth.
Through all the backward years of history look—
These plainly prove that declaration's truth.
Kingdoms may rise, and, with unquestioned sway,
Monarchs may rule, and none their right gainsay,

XXX.

But, founded on another base than this,
That monarch's might shall surely pass away;
No kingdom is so strong that it can miss
This destiny. A premature decay
Has greeted, and will ever greet, that land
Whose weak foundation trembles in the sand.

XXXI.

The sword is mighty; by its bloody might
Empires have risen—risen but to fall.
A nation built in blood must ever fight,
Or lose its name and power. 'Tis not all
To conquer once; an enemy subdued
Waits but a happy chance for further feud.

XXXII.

Nor will the nation nurtured by the sword,
If undisturbed by subjugated foes,
Remain in peace and rest; one murmured word
Of discontent will plunge it in the throes
Of fratricidal warfare; and not long
That word remains uncalled for by some wrong.

XXXIII.

The page of history is blotted o'er
With tales of bloodshed. Not a single nation
Exists, but spent its greater life in war.
And in each Power's restless fluctuation
From might to weakness, and from servitude
To might, is shown the sword's incertitude.

XXXIV.

Until the time when every mighty Power
Stands ready to confess the Christian creed
That bloodshed is a sin—until that hour
Has come, all Europe's treasuries must bleed,
That naval armaments may grimly stand,
And military menace every land.

XXXV.

Then, England, since an universal peace,
A peace eternal, has not been proclaimed,
Thy military might must still increase,
Thy naval glory must not be defamed.
But only when thine honour shall demand,
Or injured right, upraise thy martial hand.

XXXVI.

Be Christian first and last, and be not slow
To propagate the cause of arbitration.
Let peaceful compacts, bloodless victories, grow
Till hideous war, with ruthless devastation,
Destroy no more the beauty of thy land,
Nor raise against thy homes its bloodstained hand.

XXXVII.

Be Christian first and last, for thus alone
Shalt thou attain to might unfaltering.
No nation in the past has ever known
The lasting power which faith alone can bring.
Though each in turn has gained a glorious name,
Not one has risen to eternal fame.

XXXVIII.

The Roman Cæsars, with increasing pride,
"Outstretched their hands and grasped a hemisphere."
Their glory swelled with ever-flowing tide,
And nations bowed to them in trembling fear.
Their eagles flew, and lofty was their flight,
Yet only Cæsar's empire met their sight.

XXXIX.

But now the Roman Empire is no more;
No longer Roman eagles sweep the sky.
The pampered luxury of Rome soon bore
Its wonted fruit—gross immorality;
And weakened thus, and by internal strife,
Great Cæsar's Empire yielded up its life.

XL.

And classic Greece, which, in a former age,
Bore mighty warriors without compeer,
Knew not the land whose war-compelling gage
Could not be taken up without a fear.
But now her power is so completely broke,
She almost yields her to an Asian yoke.

XLI.

And France, in later days, has girded on
A might magnificent; and none could stay
The pow'r of her adored Napoleon,
Before whose hosts, in ill-concealed dismay,
The nations fled. Then France her flag unfurled,
And waved it proudly over half a world.

XLII.

But not in England. And when Bonaparte
Would lay the British nation at his feet,
Her legions tore his mighty hosts apart,
And snatched the Conqueror from his lofty seat.
Then France's glory faded fast away,
Till not a nation owned her sovereign sway.

XLIII.

And thus have mighty nations ever perished,
Or lost the greater portion of their might,
When, as their sole upholder, they have cherished
The reeking sword, in disregard of right.
Then, England, take thou warning by their fate,
And keep thy Christian faith inviolate.

XLIV.

America's Republic stands alone.
But once for bloody glory did she raise
Her martial hand; and Canada was thrown
Into a state of war.* But all essays
To sever her allegiance from her King
Proved vain—her faith remained unfaltering.

* The war of 1812-14.

XLV.

But once America unrighteously
Led forth her armies. Only to defend
Her people's honour and integrity
Has she, since then, allowed them to contend
In bitter warfare. And the peaceful arts
Engage more readily her people's hearts.

XLVI.

A noble nation striving peacefully
To gain the highest pinnacle of honour ;
Without a peer in ingenuity ;
Well mayest thou, great England, look upon her
As worthier far to be thy firm ally
Than any European monarchy.

XLVII.

Send forth thy Prince's son, and let him find
In broad America a worthy bride.
Thus let the ties of blood together bind
The Anglo-Saxon race on either side
The great Atlantic. Keep thy princes free
From royal Europe's mad heredity.

XLVIII.

Far better were it they should choose their brides
From some American pure family,
Than wed their cousins, in whose blood, besides
The fell disease which immorality
Of ancestors has planted there, there run
Weaknesses caused by kindred's union.

XLIX.

The scurvy-stricken family whose head
Rules all the Russias' limitless domain ;
The progeny of Ludwig, lately dead
By his own hand ; the Hohenzollern vain
And proud, and yet diseased ; or Austria's queen
Whose hidden madness still is plainly seen :

L.

Shall we defile our royal English blood
By marriage with such families as these ?
Shall English kings inherit all this flood
Of imbecility and dread disease ?
Must all the purity of Guelph be so
Impaired and ruined by this noisome flow ?

LI.

Nay, rather let us throw aside that form,
(That well had been abolished in the past),
Which bids our royal princes to conform
To rules as rigid as the Indian caste
Distinctions, nor a single Prince allows
To marry other than a royal spouse.

LII.

And let our England's royal House be bound
By wedlock to America. Perchance
This bond may, in a future day, be found
The first of many, which shall so enhance
Our mutual love that, by God's kindly grace,
On History's page this name shall have a place:
"THE EMPIRE OF THE ANGLO-SAXON RACE."

LIII.

Great England! Land of liberty and peace,
With fond regret I leave thy hallowed shore;
But, in my exile, I can never cease
To love the Land that I may see no more.
All foreign countries are alike to me;
My heart's affection is bound up in thee.

Blue, boundless and free, the deep-flowing sea
Environs on every side
The ship, which the gale, well-filling each sail,
Impels through the rolling tide.

Around, far and near, bright, foaming and clear,
The billows tumultuous roll ;
And their message to me is, "Free, wildly free !
"Free ever from man's control !"

As round me they throng, I hear their wild song,
And echo its truthful strain.
The power of man, that limitless span
Of ocean, can ne'er restrain.

But I know that their Maker can challenge each breaker,
And still every wave by His word ;
And o'er me a feeling comes silently stealing
Of awe at the might of the Lord.

And sweet is the thought, by memory brought,
That once on the waters He trod ;
And my soul seems to be, on the breast of the sea,
Alone in the presence of God.

Then soft on the air I whisper a prayer,
And know 'twill be echoed above :
"Be Thou very near her to comfort and cheer her,
Oh, God, bless and cherish my Love !"

CANTO THE SECOND.

I.

Renowned Quebec, upon its rocky height,
  Stands frowning o'er St. Lawrence' noble river;
Well-nigh impregnable, its chosen site
  Bespeaks its founder's wisdom, and forever
Should be remembered all the toil and pain
Endured by him, brave Samuel de Champlain.

II.

Not light the task, nor enviable the lot
  Of him who thus would plant, on shores unknown,
And in a wild and never-trodden spot,
  A new-born city's first foundation stone.
A sturdy courage and a fearless heart
Belong to him who plays so bold a part.

III.

Not first to land in Acadie, nor first
To sail the great St. Lawrence, brave Champlain
Yet dared what none before him ever durst—
To give his life and labour—not for gain
To be derived from profitable trade—
Ambition else by hardship had been stayed;

IV.

But, for his king to found a colony,
And, for his God to win another land,
He suffered pain and hardship patiently;
And, with a busy and unflinching hand,
He laboured on that wild and rugged shore;
Nor ceased to labour till he breathed no more.

V.

He had not thus endured, as he endured,
Except his faith had given him new might;
Nor had he been to suffering inured,
And patient borne, except the holy rite,
Each day renewed, had cheered his fainting soul,
Enabling him to keep his courage whole.

VI.

Ye, living in your luxury and ease,
Think not of all your country's fathers bore ;
And still forget the famine and disease
Those pioneers suffered on your shore.
Their names are unfamiliar on your tongue,
Their deeds but vaguely known, their praise unsung.

VII.

So has it been, and so shall ever be :
The man who stands to-day a shining light,
The hero who commands our fealty,
To-morrow, in oblivion's dark night,
Will be forgotten, or, on history's page,
May flicker dimly in a future age.

VIII.

Think not, ye men who seek to carve your name
On monuments of everlasting stone,
That ye can thus secure eternal fame.
Far greater deeds than yours have others done,
And greater far the harvest they have sown,
Which now ye reap, while they remain unknown.

IX.

As through the ages, silent and unseen,
The tiny corals work beneath the wave
And build a reef, which reef had never been
Except each coral there had found a grave ;
So work the heroes of the human race,
And in their work-field find a resting place.

X.

How vast the number of the coral shells
That form the reef! And yet of these but one
Of many thousands ever elsewhere dwells
Than on that reef; all hidden and unknown
The rest remain, and few indeed are they
Which shine as jewels at a later day.

XI.

And thus have lived our heroes in the past :
The army of the brave and noble who
Have laboured uncomplaining, and at last
Have yielded up their lives ; but there are few
Whose names stand forth, as worth would bid them stand,
Revered and honoured in their fatherland.

XII.

But Canada, let not the brave Champlain
Be thus in dark oblivion forgot.
Grant him the fame he never sought to gain ;
Pay him the honour that he courted not ;
And on thine earliest page of history
Write large his name, not as a mystery

XIII.

Or name unknown—but tell his deeds abroad,
And teach thy children all that he has done.
Not hard the task, and thou canst well afford
To show the gratitude that he has won
From thee ; and thus thou surely wilt impart
A proud ambition in thy children's heart

XIV.

To imitate the man, so true and brave,
Who laboured self-denyingly in life,
And 'neath the city's walls has found a grave,
At rest at last, and free from further strife.
Thus, as thy children knowledge of him gain,
Their hearts shall burn to emulate Champlain.

XV.

I stand upon the plains of Abraham,
And, silent as I stand, a train of thought
Comes o'er me, and the spot whereon I am
Seems almost holy ground; for here was fought
That mighty battle, whose event would show
If Canada were British soil or no.

XVI.

Before my eyes a vision rises bright,
And, in the vision, I can clearly see
The actions re-enacted of that fight;
And grand indeed the sight appears to me.
Repictured thus, I gaze upon the scene,
And meditate again on what has been.

XVII.

Ere yet the light had broken on that morn,*
Before the sun had shed his rays around,

* The facts related in the following verses relative to the siege of Quebec and the death of Wolfe have been taken from Dr. Withrow's "History of Canada," and I take this opportunity of acknowledging my indebtedness to the author. The history has been invaluable to me in the composition of this poem. Without its help the "Song" would have been far more incomplete than it now is.—*W. S. S.*

While blackest darkness heralded the dawn,
The little fleet had left its anchor-ground ;
With not a lantern showing light or gleam,
It floated silently adown the stream.

XVIII.

Within the flagship, weakened by the pain
Of recent fever, Wolfe reclining lay.
Unfit to bear the war's fatigue and strain,
He yet was armed and ready for the fray.
Forgetful of *his* pain and suffering,
He thought but of his country and his king.

XIX.

His duty bade him fight, and he would fight ;
His country bade him win, and he would win
If bravery could put the foe to flight.
If courage and a sturdy heart within
Could win the day, he feared not the event ;
His men were veterans on victory bent.

XX.

Yet, as he lay upon his couch at rest
Among his officers, he seemed to be
Prescient of his fate; for he addressed
His friends in verses from an Elegy,
And to this line a special accent gave:
"The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

XXI.

Foreknowledge of his fate perchance impressed
This truth upon him. Glory's path would lead
Him to the grave that day, and there at rest,
No longer pain or glory would he heed.
Full well might these appear a mockery
To him who soon would meet eternity.*

---

* "Pale and weak with recent illness, Wolfe reclined among his officers, and, in a low tone, blending with the rippling of the river, recited several stanzas of the recent poem, Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.' Perhaps the shadow of his approaching fate stole upon his mind, as in mournful cadence he whispered the strangely pathetic words:

'The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth ere gave,
Alike await the inexorable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.'

"With a prescience of the hollowness of military renown, he exclaimed, 'I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec to-morrow.'"—*Withrow's History of Canada, p. 246.*

XXII.

And who will blame him if his thought recurred,
At such a time, to England and the maid
Beloved, to whom he gave his plighted word
Ere parting? Who will wonder at the shade
Of sorrow darkling on his troubled brow,
As he reflects on what may not be now?

XXIII.

A vision bright, of home and happiness,
Of calm domestic joy, before him lies.
One moment gazes he—his hands hard press
His forehead, and the hardy soldier sighs—
One moment only, then he turns away,
Prepared to lead his army to the fray.

XXIV.

Below the city, anchored by the shore,
The fleet is floating; and in silent speed,
The soldiers land, Wolfe leading in the fore.
And, if of urging there were any need,
His fearless mien and proud determination
Would banish every thought of hesitation.

XXV.

But fear is foreign to each noble heart
That follows him, and in the breast of none
Has doubt or hesitation any part ;
Let him but lead, and they will follow on.
They listen to his orders and obey ;
He fears not death or danger—why should they?

XXVI.

Above them tow'rs the cliff precipitous,
Well-nigh impassable its steep ascent.
How hard the task and how laborious
To scale the cliff! Yet forth the order went.
Then, in the darkness, stealthily they creep,
And silently approach the rocky steep.

XXVII.

Like Indians soft stealing on the trail
Of hated foes, intent upon surprise,
And silent moving lest their project fail,
When death in premature detection lies ;
So noiselessly that army scaled the height,
While darkness hid them from the foemen's sight.

XXVIII.

At length they reach the summit unattacked,
Then form, and silent march upon the plain.
And now they learn the foe has seen their act,
For onward towards them comes his shining train.
The day has broke, the sun now brightly shines,
And each can plainly see the other's lines.

XXIX.

Then from the French battalions comes the fire
Of musketry, and bullets hissing loud
Pierce through the English ranks, yet but inspire
The veterans to vengeance, and their blood
Boils in their veins. Yet silently they still
March on, awaiting their commander's will.

XXX.

At length is heard the general's command
To fire. A fearful volley from their ranks
Then belches forth, and, sweeping o'er the land,
The bullets carry ruin to the Franks.
In deep dismay the Frenchmen hesitate
One moment; then, with valour desperate,

XXXI.

They turn again, restrengthened, to the fight.
But fruitless all the bravery they show;
Repulsed anew, ere long they take to flight,
Pursued by English bullets as they go.
And from the time the battle first begun,
But fifteen minutes passed till it was won.

XXXII.

But deadly was the devastation wrought
On either side, and dearly was the day
Of glory by the English army bought.
Thrice bullet-pierced their young commander lay.
He lived to hear the cry of victory,
Then yielded up his spirit willingly.

XXXIII.

Good reason had the conquerors to mourn;
Yet had the vanquished greater cause than they.
The day was lost, and sadly had they borne
Their leader from the battle-field away.
Beloved Montcalm, the generous and brave,
Upon that field had found a bloody grave.

XXXIV.

And what of her who sat in silent grief,
  And listened vainly for the step of him
Whose coming only could afford relief,
  And stay the tears in which her eyes will swim ?
Ah ! History has nought to say of her,
Nor speaks it of the sorrow she must bear.

XXXV.

The full extent of war's resulting curse
  Is never known : the country's gain or loss
Is reckoned by its victory or reverse,
  The dead are numbered—but the heavy cross
Of suffering, which womankind must bear,
Is reckoned not among the deeds of war.

XXXVI.

Nor can it be : while war is arbiter
  Between the nations, private suffering
Must count for nought ; affection must defer
  To duty, whatso'er the pain it bring.
The soldier must obey the bugle call ;
The wife must weep, and pray he may not fall.

XXXVII.

While war is arbiter—but must it be
Forever arbiter? Will not the day
Of lasting peace dawn ever? Will not ye,
Ye Christian nations, raise your voice, and stay
The march of war throughout the universe;
And rid you of its agony and curse?

XXXVIII.

It lies not in your pow'r to order those,
The nations still uncivilized, to cease
From war, and, if they make themselves your foes,
Ye must resist; yet can ye order peace
Among yourselves. And, sure, ye Christian lands
Would wash the blood of war from off your hands!

XXXIX

Slow, slow, the march of Christianity,
Yet sure—more sure because its march is slow;
And settled now in peace and amity
Are issues which, but fifty years ago,
Had been the cause of bloodshed and of strife,
And cost each country many a noble life.

XL.

Then let the infidel or atheist,
Or him who doubts if ever God can be,
And questions the existence of a Christ,
Mark well the fruits of Christianity,
And say what other power has ever wrought
The good that Christianity has brought.

XLI.

No myth or vain delusion can achieve
What love of Christ has done ; no mockery
Can bring the troubled comfort, or relieve
The broken heart ; nor can idolatry
Inspire our hearts with love and charity :
These follow only Christianity.

XLII.

I pause before a simple monument,
And read inscribed thereon the noble names
Montcalm and Wolfe. Their enmity is spent,
And each from French and English justly claims
An equal reverence. This humble stone
Stands emblematic of their union.

XLIII.

And are the nations so united now,
In Canada, that nothing comes between
To break the bond, or disannul the vow
Of friendship and of fealty to our Queen ?
Do they not rather live each wide apart
From other, bound in name but not in heart ?

XLIV.

Well nigh a century and thirty years
Have run their course since Canada became
An English colony ; and yet appears,
Within her shores, a unity in name,
And name alone, between those races who
Should live as one, but still exist as two.

XLV.

What boots it that an oath of loyalty
To Britain's Queen is taken by the French,
If they but wait the opportunity
To give that man support who seeks to wrench
This vast Dominion from the British Crown,
And tear our noble red-cross banner down ?

XLVI.

And why call that an English colony
In which a foreign tongue predominates ?
And how will he preserve his loyalty
To England, who the name of England hates ?
Too generous have been your governors,
Too lightly exercised their given powers.

XLVII.

Ere this, if England had asserted all
The rights that conquest gave, here might have been
A colony which we could truly call
A British land. Nor should we now have seen,
In Canada, two nations side by side
Upgrowing, by affection's bond untied.

XLVIII.

' A nation self-divided cannot stand."
All history has proved this adage true.
And, Canada, if thou would'st be a land
Of might and power, thou must surely do
As other lands have done ; it cannot be
That thou wilt else secure prosperity.

XLIX.

Let not incipient rebellion grow
To actual revolt, but trample down
Its very sign, and with a mighty blow,
Crush all who rise disloyal to the Crown.
Do this, but this alone will not suffice;
A sterner duty yet before thee lies.

L.

Send forth the edict that the English tongue,
And it alone, shall be official here,
And teach the language everywhere among
The French in all the counties far and near.
Thus, and thus only, canst thou hope to see
Thy future self preserved in unity.

LI.

But what are these to me? A passing thought,
An evanescent stirring of the brain,
Which, for a time, forgetfulness has brought,
And temporary soothing of my pain.
But as I turn away, anew I feel
The burning sore which time can never heal.

LII.

Apart from her I love I wander here,
  In thought communing with that absent one ;
In body distant, though in spirit near,
  I feel our hearts are in communion.
Then, softly murmuring, I breathe this lay
To her so near, and yet so far away.

From regions remote my message shall float
  On zephyrs across the sea,
And softly thou'lt hear the words in thine ear,
  "I love thee, I love but thee."*

Though distant I rove, sweet thoughts of my love
  Are ever at home with me.
Each day and each hour but strengthen their power;
  I love thee, I love but thee.

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*Yet in spite of thy queenly disdain,
  Thou art seared by my passion and pain ;
  Thou shall hear me repeat till I die for it, Sweet,
    "I love thee ! I dare to love *thee*.
—*Marie Corelli*, "*The Romance of Two Worlds.*"

If sorrow be thine, oh ! cease to repine,
For mine thou shalt always be.
Oh ! breathe not a sigh, though I am not nigh,
I love thee, I love but thee.

Though oceans divide us and fortune deride us,
No two are more near than we ;
Our hearts close are beating in tenderest greeting ;
I love thee, I love but thee.

I ask not of Fate a lordly estate,
Or position of high degree ;
I ask her alone to grant me my own ;
I love thee, I love but thee.

CANTO THE THIRD.

I.

Below me, as I stand upon this mount,
I see, in panoramic view displayed
So clearly that with ease I could recount
The mighty buildings and the ships fast stayed
Within the harbour, Montreal, the port
Of Canada, and once its chiefest fort.

II.

And, winding through the valley, I can see
St. Lawrence river, and the fields beyond
Of corn and pasture land. The scenery
Reminds me of my native land, and fond,
Yet sad and sorrow-laden, memories
Possess me as the vision meets my eyes.

III.

My native land! still, still I think of thee;
By day and night the oft-recurring thought
Brings intermingled pain and joy to me.
And oft I curse the fortune which has brought
These days of exile and of solitude
To one who longs for peace and quietude.

IV.

My life has not been sinless, yet what sin
Have I committed that my punishment
Should be so great! An aching heart within
Still makes me sorrowful. Why was I sent,
Far from my home, to wander lonely here,
Apart from those whose love I hold so dear?

V.

I met and loved her whom I may not wed,
And, ere I knew that she could not be mine,
I thought that God upon my life had shed
A brighter light than had been wont to shine.
And, sure, this power cometh from above;
He teacheth us to love, whose name is Love.

VI.

And since He giveth us this love, oh! why
Doth He not smooth the path of love, and hear
The prayer of those who in their anguish cry
To Him for help, and in their godly fear
Rely upon His aid? And why hath He
Prepared this pain and agony for me?

VII.

Be still my soul; it is not thine to take
Thy God to task. Canst thou forget the pain
And agony He suffered for thy sake?
Or canst remember these and not restrain
Thyself from challenging thy God? Be still,
And bow submissive to thy Father's will.

VIII.

'Twas man condemned me to a life of woe,
And 'twas not God. The pride of man hath said
That I must suffer thus. It must be so
Because the baronet was nobler bred.
Oh, cruel, cruel wrong! Oh mockery!
That bluer blood should sever her from me!

IX.

Give thanks to God, Canadians, that ye
Have not been cursed with nobility.
And, as you love your country, keep it free
From those whose utter inutility
For any good is proven by their pride
Of blood; they have not aught to boast beside.

X.

A noble land is yours, and ye may well
Be proud of her. And here before me lies
Your greatest city. Would that I could tell
One-half the tales of brave self-sacrifice
Which those who founded Montreal had shown,
Ere yet the name of Canada was known.

XI.

But, should I strive to speak of every deed
Of sacrifice and brave endurance borne
By all your heroes, I should feel the need
Of greater time, and heart less sorrow-worn;
Nor have the Muses so inspired my pen
That I can fitly praise those noble men.

XII.

Yet would I strive to sing as best I may
Of him who landed first upon this shore;
I fain would speak of hardy Cartier:
His ship the first St. Lawrence ever bore;
His face the first pale-face the Indians
Had seen; his deeds well merit utterance.

XIII.

Three centuries and half a century
Have sped their course since Cartier set sail
From France, intent upon discovery.
He oft had heard the wonder-stirring tale
Of distant lands possessed of mighty wealth;
These now he would discover for himself.

XIV.

And westward sailing on his unknown way,
In course of time he met his due reward;
And sailed this noble river on the day
Made holy to St. Lawrence. He implored
The blessing of the Saint upon his aim,
And called the gulf and river by his name.

XV.

Then, landing on the wooded shore, he knelt
Before his God, and offered up a prayer
To Him, to show the gratitude he felt
Towards the God whose hand had brought him there
In safety. And he asked for further aid
And guidance in the land where now he stayed.

XVI.

When men were more unlearned than they are
In this our present scientific day,
The earth to heaven seemed to be more near,
And God Himself appeared less far away.
For deeds accomplished, or for blessings given,
Due praise was offered to the God of Heaven.

XVII.

But now our wise philosophers, and those
Whose scientific knowledge is so vast
That he who knows what has escaped them knows
What is not worth the knowing; these, at last,
Have reached to such a pinnacle of pride,
That God Himself is little by their side.

XVIII.

In truth, their learning has become so great
That their imagination can conceive
No being mightier than they, and, straight,
In God's existence they will not believe.
And men untutored listen to their word,
And deem those foolish who believe the Lord.

XIX.

But Cartier was living in an age
When Science in her cradle was asleep,
And men accounted not themselves too sage
To bow to God in prayer, nor to reap
The benefits which only can accrue
To those whose faith in God is pure and true.

XX.

So he besought a blessing from his Lord
Before he re-embarked ; then, setting sail,
The newly-christened river he explored,
Till, favored by a gently-blowing gale,
He reached the Hochelaga settlement
Of Indians, and thence no further went.

XXI.

A hundred years elapsed, and then there came
A little band from France to yonder isle;
To found a mission and a fort their aim;
And there they laboured for their faith, the while
Protecting them as best they might from those
Who proved themselves their fierce and bitter foes.

XXII.

The Iroquois, by cruel hate possessed,
Left not a chance untaken to obtain
A reeking scalp; and fiercely they oppressed
The little band, whose suffering and pain,
In Montreal and all throughout the land,
Seemed more than human frailty could withstand.

XXIII

But Maisonneuve and they who followed him
Were bent upon a high and holy aim;
Their undertaking was no foolish whim,
Nor had they come for honour or for fame.
A Jesuitic band, they sought to win
Those Indians from a life of death and sin.

XXIV.

They sought to win them to the faith which they
  Themselves possessed, and thought it not a hard,
Nor yet an unexpected, thing to lay
  Their own lives down to win them. Their reward
They counted not to win on earth, but knew
That each in Heaven would gain the glory due.

XXV.

What though the Jesuitic creed be not
  As true and generous a faith as that
Which we profess; what though a bloody blot
  Has stained its page of history; the great
And worthy deeds those fathers wrought should raise
A feeling in our hearts of loving praise.

XXVI.

They suffered for their God and for their Pope;
  They suffered for their faith, to them as true
And pure as ours to us, and in the hope
  That God would bless their labours, and endue
The savage Indians with a softer heart,
And give them with the blessed ones a part.

XXVII

They merit praise and honour, but the cause
For which they laboured merits none of these ;
A cruel creed, with harsh and bloody laws,
The very name of Christ it travesties.
An evil Order, working in the name
Of Christianity dark deeds of shame.

XXVIII.

He whom they call their Master suffered not
His followers to mingle in the strife
Of politics—not such their chosen lot ;
Theirs to prepare men for a higher life.
And yet He bade them to their king be true,
And offer unto Cæsar all his due.

XXIX.

But this do not the Jesuits ; they fain
Would undermine the power of the land
In which they dwell, and every effort strain
To take the civil sceptre in their hand.
They creep, as serpents, smoothly on their prey,
But subtly spread their poison in the way.

XXX.

And these, Canadians, have found a home
Within your shores. Ye know not what ye do
In harb'ring them. Be sure the day will come
When ye will bitterly and sadly rue
Your action. Other lands will not permit
The entrance of the hated Jesuit.

XXXI.

But why should I presume to thus dictate
To ye? And what know I of all the things
Which influence your Ministers of State,
That I should utter forth these murmurings?
By greed and selfish motives unpossessed,
They, in their wisdom, must do what is best!

XXXII.

I stand upon the hill at Ottawa,
And stretching wide before me lies a scene
Of pretty lowland country. Near and far,
The river Ottawa winds on between
The wooded slopes and meadow-lands, where lie
The lazy cattle chewing silently.

XXXIII.

The scene is unimposing; there is nought
Of grandeur or magnificence displayed;
But by its quiet prettiness is brought
A sense of calm enjoyment—hill and glade
And peaceful meadow, all alike suggest
Sweet thoughts of still serenity and rest.

XXXIV.

The face of Nature, for the student's mind,
Provides a subject inexhaustible.
And, in its study, weary men may find
A solace for the troubles caused by all
The sorrows and afflictions which must be
The lot of all, of high or low degree.

XXXV.

The mountain, by its grandeur, testifies
To His omnipotence who placed it there;
The rushing, mighty torrent verifies
His ceaseless working; and His constant care
And kindliness is proven by the still
And growing meadow, and the purling rill.

XXXVI.

Thus, whatsoever his environment,
The sorrow-stricken one can find a balm,
Which should assuage his moody discontent,
Replacing it by trustfulness and calm.
For God reveals Himself in every place,
And writes His presence on Creation's face.

XXXVII.

And here I feel a quiet peace unfelt
In all my solitary wanderings
Before. My heavy troubles seem to melt
Away, and Faith a calm contentment brings,
And all my misery aside is thrown ;
He cares for me who cares for all His own.

XXXVIII.

A pile majestic and magnificent,
Of lofty buildings, stands upon this hill ;
Unequalled elsewhere on the continent,
It well bespeaks the architective skill
Displayed in this our nineteenth century ;
And clothes the city with its dignity.

XXXIX.

Within these walls are gathered in debate
The statesmen and the legislators, who
Are learned in the matters of the State.
Alike to God and to their country true
These men should be, and high above the rest
Exalted, seeking not self-interest.

XL.

These hold the country's welfare in their hand.
A mighty trust to them has been consigned.
They know their duty, and should understand
What acts will echo best the people's mind ;
And they should act, in matters small or great,
As wisdom and their consciences dictate.

XLI.

Thus should they act, but thus do not they all,
But mildly bow to their Dictator's bid ;
They fear to disobey him, lest they fall
Quick victims to his anger, or be chid
Severely by the leader, in whose power
It lies to give his slaves official dower.

XLII.

Thus is a heavy premium placed upon
A blind obedience and servility;
And high position hardly can be won
Except by meekness and docility:
By meekness where assertion would be right;
By weak docility where should be might.

XLIII.

And they, the Ministers of State, who hold
The gift of the office and the nation's trust,
From long retained authority grow bold,
And, almost flagrantly, they dare adjust
The national affairs in such a way
As best will serve them, and protract their sway.

XLIV.

But not too far do they attempt to go
In serving self. There stands an arbiter
To whom they must appeal; were this not so,
Their conscientiousness might not deter
The country's servants from committing deeds
To hinder which their shame now intercedes.

XLV.

And yet, methinks, the arbiter to whom
They must appeal is far too liberal,
Or far too careless. When the day has come
In which a judgment must be given on all
The actions of their Ministers of State,
The people are too mild and moderate.

XLVI.

Or they forget the misdeeds of the past—
Misdeeds which well deserve a harder name,
And which at first provoked a stormy blast
Of anger, and aroused a sense of shame
Within the people's hearts—these are forgot,
Though on the Nation's life they leave a blot.

XLVII.

They are forgot; for party feelings run
More high than love of country, and the man,
Who can defeat the chosen champion
Of an opposing party, will obtain
A full forgiveness for his deeds of shame,
And crown himself with all a hero's fame.

XLVIII.

Not Liberal and not Conservative
Alone compels my wrath ; to either party
My feeble but impartial pen would give
A condemnation passionate and hearty ;
Each sees the wreck the Catholic has made
In Canada, and each implores his aid.

XLIX.

Each begs support for only selfish ends ;
Unfired with love for Britain's Queen they cry,
And seek to make the Catholics their friends
For party purposes ; their loyalty
Bombastically swearing, each bows down
To those inimical to Britain's Crown.

L.

'Tis hate of bigotry, they glibly shout,
Impels their tolerance : Oh ! take that word
And bid the feet of License crush it out ;
For License now is undisputed lord.
Let not the bigot live,—*but nurse the snake*
That brings the Inquisition in its wake !

LI.

See where, in old Quebec, its Premier
  Uplifts the Tricolor, and waves it high,
While shouts un-English rend the poisoned air
  To greet the new-born Nationality ;
And hear Ontario's Minister confess
His joy for this, a Liberal success !

LII.

And is it bigotry to interfere
  When treason stalks triumphant through the land ?
Will none but bigots hear the traitors cheer,
  Nor long to raise aloft the armed hand ?
Your ancestors would not account it so ;
And English hearts would burn to strike the blow.

LIII.

Tear down that flag! in God's name and the Queen's.
  Will not the Red Cross Banner rouse your zeal ?
Tear down that flag ! and let who intervenes
  Bite hard the dust beneath your iron heel.
Tear down that flag !—Oh, Canada ! bow, bow
Your shameful head in deep contrition now.

LIV.

What wonder, since your party deeds alone
Absorb your thought and wake your energy,
That insurrection's seeds are widely sown,
And voice is given to dark disloyalty?
Ye clothe your land in insurrection's dress,
And nurse disloyalty, by callousness.

LV,

And I, though sojourning a stranger here,
Will dare to raise my voice in condemnation,
When words unwelcome to an English ear
Are heard re-echoing without cessation;
The while accursed party interests
Drive patriotic thoughts from out your breasts.

LVI.

I marvel not that politicians stand
In ill repute with honourable men,
While, through the length and breadth of this fair land,
They mark themselves with party's evil stain,
And enter in the field of politics
For selfish ends attained by shameless tricks.

LVII.

Yet are not politicians in one mould
All fashioned; there are honest men and true
Who serve their country, not for love of gold
Or fame, but for the good that they can do.
Would God that these, and these alone, held sway
Within your senates, Canada, to-day!

LVIII.

But politics shall occupy my thought
No more. I turn with deep relief away
From that which lack of principle has brought
To premature and undeserved decay.
Perchance, from out the ashes where it lies,
True statesmanship may, phœnix-like, arise.

LIX.

The sun is setting, and its shining rays
Reflect them redly on the river's breast,
Which now an iridescent gleam displays,
Which, like a mighty opal, is possessed
With ever-changing hues of brilliancy;
As sets the sun their light I still can see.

LX.

The twilight hour approaches—silent hour
For calm reflection or communion,
When, in a quiet, unfrequented bower,
Fond lovers whisper as they sit alone.
And I would send a greeting to the one
Whose heart with mine still beats in unison.

My Love, my own Sweetheart,
Let sorrow not be thine,
Though still we live apart,
The lamp of Hope must shine.

And, shedding on our path
The light of trustfulness
And never-failing faith,
'Twill make our sorrow less.

Let Hope then ever be
At home within thy breast,
And know God loveth thee,
And knoweth what is best.

He careth for the trees,
  For every beast and bird ;
And thinkest thou thy pleas
  In Heaven are unheard ?

Nay, God has heard each prayer,
  And He will answer thee.
Trust to His loving care,
  And live thou patiently.

And when the looked-for day
  Of happiness and rest
Has come, we both shall say :
  " God truly knew the best."

And fondly to my heart
  I'll press thee, dearest Life ;
And none us two shall part,
  For thou wilt be my wife.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

I.

Toronto, on its island-girded bay,
Full well protected from the storms which blow
Across the lake, stands proudly, as well may
The capital of all Ontario.
So situate, its properties beguile,
Inviting me to pause and rest awhile.

II.

When young America (then recently
An independent nation, full of pride
Engendered by her new-born dignity),
Would sever Canada from England's side,
She sent an armed fleet across the lake,
This town to capture and its fort to take.

III.

Six hundred soldiers only guarded then
The little fort; but in their veins there flowed
The blood of proud and valiant Englishmen.
And in their hearts a bitter hatred glowed
Against the nation, whose unjust attack
But urged them on to drive the invader back.

IV.

And, though the force opposing them was nigh
Three times the number of their own, yet still
They fought against their landing valiantly,
Contending with a fierce and dogged will.
But numbers overpowered the gallant band,
And soon the foe was safe upon the land.

V.

Then inch by inch contested they the ground,
Determined not to yield to quick defeat;
But, bravely though they fought, ere long they found
Themselves compelled to beat a slow retreat.
But, falling back before the enemy,
They lost not yet the hope of victory.

VI.

Meanwhile the enemy advanced within
Two hundred yards of where the garrison
Was quartered. Sudden ceased the battle's din,
And he who led the invading army on
Gave orders for a halt, in expectation
Of winning now the fort's capitulation.

VII.

Then, as they halted, sudden a report,
As of an earthquake, rent the trembling air,
And, midst the débris of the scattered fort,
Two hundred slain Americans lay there.
The British had retreated, but had fired
The powder-magazine as they retired.

VIII.

Th' enraged Americans accounted this
An act of baseness and of perfidy.
I know not what the law of slaughter is,
But this I know, that they can hardly be
Renowned for faith and truth to honour's code,
Whose lives are spent in butchery and blood.

IX.

The man's environment perfects the man,
And each can choose his own environment.
And each can either cause to die, or fan
To brighter life, the seed or rudiment
Of good or evil moral tendency
Acquired, or inbred by heredity.

X.

And he who chooses warfare as the life
Most suited to his predilections, he
Who finds his happiness in constant strife,
Will hardly honour peace and amity.
In bloodshed living, gentle virtues all
A victim to his martial taste will fall.

XI.

In ancient days, when men were more uncouth
Than now they are, it might be well, perchance,
That they should study warfare, for, in sooth,
The man who knew not how to poise the lance
Or wield the mighty battle-axe, was then
Despised and scorned by all his fellow-men.

XII.

But now the code of honour should not be
As crude and rough as in that ancient day.
The onward march of Christianity
Should sweep the sword and battle-axe away;
And Love, the creed which Christ our Master taught,
Should bring the pride of martial skill to nought.

XIII.

Let man still glory in the strength and might
That God has given him. But it were well
That he should use it not at all to fight
Against his fellow-men. He still can dwell
In peace with them, and yet retain the power
Which is his great and justly-valued dower.

XIV.

I turn me from the thoughts of war, and gaze
With pleased eyes upon this little bay.
So bright a scene, in all my exiled days,
I have not looked upon; and like a ray
Of light upon my darkened life it seems,
Reviving hope within me by its beams.

XV.

The bay is dotted with a hundred boats,
And brightly on the sail of many a skiff
The evening sun is shining, as it floats
Upon the water, shining thus as if
To tell the little skiff, as on she goes,
That he will guard her from tempestuous foes.

XVI.

In every boat I see, a maiden fair
Accompanies the rower, and the sound
Of merriment and laughter on the air
Arises, softly echoing around.
And all seem bright and happy, and have one
To keep them so—I only sit alone.

XVII.

I sit alone as they pass joyous by,
Nor note my presence ; or, if they should see,
Their eyes but rest upon me absently,
Then turn away. They all are strange to me,
And I to them. More lonely is my mood
Here, than in Nature's wildest solitude.

XVIII.

A pang of emulation, so severe
'Tis almost envy, now possesses me;
And, were I woman, many a bitter tear
Would course my cheeks. But now I am not free
To weep; my heart, though throbbing in its pain,
Uneased and comfortless must yet remain.

XIX.

Why stand I thus, and gaze upon this scene,
Since gazing but rewakes the pain that slept?
I had not thought that I should thus have been
So quickly cheated of the strength which kept
My heart from sorrowing. My pliant thought,
Suspecting not this subtlety, was caught,

XX.

And I was self-deceived, as many more
Before have been. Man estimates his power
By what he *would* do; and but little store
Can well be placed on this, what time the hour
Of trial approaches. For 'tis sadly true,
Man often cannot what he wills to do.

XXI.

His strength is not so great as he had thought
It would be ; and perchance, the hour of trial
Has come and gone, and quick defeat has brought,
Without his recognition. But denial
That it has come he dare not now put forth,
His plain defeat would make it little worth.

XXII.

And such defeat, unnoted and unseen
Till it had passed, has been my own to-day ;
And, with a sense of mortified chagrin,
I turn me from the pleasing view away,
And in the busy city seek to find
A new diversion to engage my mind.

XXIII.

How pleasing are thy streets and avenues,
Toronto ! And what massive buildings rise
Adorning them ! I cannot now but choose
To speak my admiration. Yet it lies
Beyond my power to praise as others might,
More rich than I in words, this noble sight.

XXIV.

One mighty pile stands out pre-eminent
Among the rest—thy University,
So builded that itself will represent
Its purpose, and to see it is to be
Convinced, ere word of mouth so testifies,
That 'twas designed for classic purposes.

XXV.

The square-built tow'r, the pillared entrance-way,
The massive doors, and this encolumned porch,
Proclaim that here stern Learning holdeth sway,
And here the classic Muse illumes her torch.
And, standing thus, a grand, imposing whole,
It well may awe my poor untutored soul.

XXVI.

I wander on along the tree-girt streets,
Admiring, by compulsion, all the view.
So pleasing is each changing sight that greets
My eye, as thus I slowly wander through
The city, that had Fate not bid me roam
In exile, here I'd gladly make my home.

XXVII.

Here happy homes surround me, but the sight
Of happiness is but a mockery
To me. My life is like a darkened night,
And happiness was not prepared for me ;
And rankest disappointment, unalloyed
With hope, my trustful patience has destroyed.

XXVIII.

Toronto, fare thee well ! I cannot stay
Within thy gates. Eternal restlessness
Possesses me. I must pursue my way,
Though other cities will impress me less
Than thou hast done. My native land apart,
Thou standest first in this my weary heart.

XXIX.

Niagara's small village quiet lies
Where flows the river in the open lake.
The thought of long-past actions sanctifies
This little spot. For those brave soldiers' sake
Who gladly gave their lives a sacrifice
To country, it is hallowed in my eyes.

XXX.

Here Britain's sons, and here Canadians
  Were slaughtered by the ruthless enemy,
Who swept the country o'er in furtherance
  Of their unjust desire to gratify
Their evil wish, to tear from England's hand
The part still left her in this Western land.

XXXI.

Americans, how sadly should ye mourn
  The action of your rulers on that day,
When unrelenting enmity was sworn
  Against your fathers' land. Ye cannot say,
As six and thirty years before ye said,
That gross oppression justified your deed.

XXXII.

Nay, ye were young, and, in ambition's youth,
  Ye sought to raise you to a greater state,
And waited not to think of honour's truth,
  But rushed to war in hope to alienate
The fair domain of Canada, which lay,
Apparently, a not unwilling prey.

XXXIII.

Speak not of Council Orders,* nor essay
To prove that these alone provoked the war.
The orders were rescinded ere the day
Of fighting broke.† Not these ye battled for.
Nor did the Rights of Search ‡ enrage ye so
As to compel your being England's foe.

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* "The Berlin Decree" of Napoleon, issued November 1, 1806, declared a blockade of the entire British coast. * * * Great Britain retaliated by the celebrated "Orders-in-Council," which declared all traffic with France contraband, and the vessels prosecuting it, with their cargoes, were seized. These restrictions pressed heavily on the neutrals, especially the United States, which now engrossed much of the carrying trade of the world.—*Withrow's History of Canada*, p. 301.

† War was precipitately declared June 18, 1812. * * * Almost simultaneously the obnoxious "Orders-in-Council," the chief ostensible cause of the war, were repealed.—*Ibid*, p. 303.

‡ Another cause conspired to fan the war feeling to a flame. Great Britain, pressed by the difficulty of managing her immense fleets, asserted the "right of search" of American vessels for deserters from her army. The U. S. frigate Chesapeake resisted this right, though sanctioned by international law.—*Ibid*, p. 302.

XXXIV.

Ye wanted more dominion—this alone
Provoked your action ; and, since every nation
In Europe in a state of war was thrown,
Your action merits not such condemnation
As otherwise it would. The rage of war
Is quickly spread to nations near and far.

XXXV.

But 'tis not mine to speak of that campaign,
Whose battles raged from Fort Niagara
To Queenston Heights and far-famed Lundy's Lane ;
Nor yet abated until Chippewa,
Black Rock, and Buffalo were summoned all
To war and bloodshed by the bugle call.

XXXVI.

Too long I've dwelt on deeds of war, yet one
Brave deed remains which must not be untold ;
One act—by which a gallant fight was won,
One act—by which two noble lives were sold.
This only act recounting, I will cease
To speak of war, and court the muse of peace.

XXXVII.

On Queenston Heights the battle raged, and far
Around was heard its long-continued roar.
It echoed loudly where Niagara
Lies nestling on Ontario's green shore.
It echoed loudly, nor escaped the ear
Of him whose gallant heart was steeled to fear.

XXXVIII.

The noble Brock paused not when thus he heard
The sound of warfare. Turning to his aide,
He bade him hastily to give the word
To saddle horse. Then rapidly they made
Their way across the country to the height,
And soon were in the thickest of the fight.

XXXIX.

In numbers far unequal to the foe,
The British had retired. The battery
Was taken by the enemy ; though slow,
Defeat for Britain seemed a certainty ;
When Brock arrived upon the battle-field,
And bade them form again, nor ever yield.

XL.

Himself then leading, onward to the fray
They charged, restrengthened by his confidence ;
And soon they saw the enemy give way,
Retiring slowly from the eminence.
The day was theirs, the tide of battle turned,
But dearly was that day of victory earned !

XLI.

The noble Brock would raise his sword no more ;
No more his cheering word would lead them on.
His soul had passed away from scenes of war ;
His latest battle had been fought and won.
And with his spirit, in its upward flight,
The soul of young Macdonell passed that night.

XLII.

A lofty monument, upon the Height
Where fell these two, commemorates their deed.
There stands it, tow'ring high within the sight
Of either Land. Thus let it stand, and plead,
In silent mournfulness, that further feud
Between the Lands shall never be renewed.

XLIII.

For we are brothers still—the bond of blood
Unites us closely, and, though each has done
The other wrong, unselfish deeds and good,
Which since have been exchanged, should quite atone
For injuries long past. Then clasp our hand,
America. As brothers let us stand.

XLIV.

I wander up the river's bank, my thought
Still dwelling on those troublous times of yore,
Until my mind by slow degrees is brought
To present times and scenes. A distant roar
At first recalls me from my reverie,
Then bids me trace my steps less tardily.

XLV.

I know not why, yet, as I press my way
Towards the world-renowned Falls, I feel
A thrill of awe, which words may not convey
Description of. The feeling may be real
Or fanciful, but now my trembling soul
Seems nearer God, and more in His control.

XLVI.

Majestic Falls! What little words of mine
Can paint thy grandeur? How can I essay
To picture such unpictured might as thine?
And yet I would not silent pass away,
And carry with me nothing that recalls
The grandeur of Niagara's proud Falls.

XLVII.

On, on, tumultuous waters, ever on
Unceasingly ye rush, and blindly leap
From giddy heights, in volume all unknown,
Down, down the jagged rock-protruding steep,
And, ever breaking as ye downward go,
Burst forth in show'rs like iridescent snow.

XLVIII.

Here, rolling in unbroken shining green,
Your waters smoothly curve them o'er the cliff.
No sign of foam or bubbling break is seen
As in their glassy depth they roll, as if
While all around is wreck and chaos wild,
They dare to flow conspicuously mild.

XLIX.

And here again they break while rushing o'er
Some rugged rock—a million flecks of spray
Rise, high projected in the air; before
These fall, or in the sunlight melt away,
A new-born cloud, in high-aspiring pride,
Bursts forth, and casts its foam-drops far and wide.

L.

And each new cloud a thing of life appears,
And each leaps forth as though its wild intent
Were solely to out-distance its compeers,
And rise more high than they. And each seems bent
On reaching to a height unreached before,
And tells its purpose in a muffled roar.

LI.

While, far below, a rocky destiny
Awaits the mighty waters. Loud resounds
The roaring of their falling constantly,
While from the rocks the foaming mass rebounds;
And upward rising, far above the height,
A mist half hides the waters from my sight.

LII.

The evening sun illumes the rising spray,
And forms a bow in beauty unsurpassed.
Above the Falls it bends its glist'ning ray,
While in the deep its radiance is cast.
And, as the mist or fades or thickens, so
It breaks or forms again the changing bow.

LIII.

Above the Falls the rushing rapids rage,
In awesome grandeur only less than they.
Thus have they madly tossed from age to age,
And thus have galloped on their heedless way.
In ceaseless ferment, and in constant change,
Wide o'er their rocky area they range.

LIV.

Now foaming whitely, now in rippling waves
Unbroken, haste they onward to their fate;
Each speeding hurriedly as though it craves
An early death. So reckless is the rate
Which some pursue, that, with a sudden shock,
They burst in foam-clouds on a hidden rock.

LV.

Rush on, ye mighty waters, and declare
To self-conceited man his littleness ;
Rush on, and give your music to the air,
And calm our thoughts and make our sorrows less ;
For as a friend by words of sympathy
Can soothe us, by your music so can ye.

LVI.

For in your music we can hear the voice
Of Him whose hand hath made both ye and us ,
And we, in deepest gratitude, rejoice,
And thank Him who has made ye so. And thus,
While listening to your music-roar to-day,
I seem to hear the Spirit speak and say :

LVII.

" As constant roll these waters o'er the steep,
So ceaselessly thy Father watcheth thee ;
As day and night they run, and never sleep,
So worketh He throughout eternity ;
And as their volume's measure is unknown,
So boundless is His love towards His own.

LVIII.

" Then fear not, troubled soul, nor seek to know
What destiny has been prepared for thee.
Thou seest these mighty waters onward flow,
Conforming thus to all their Lord's decree—
Then live thou as thy conscience bids thee live,
And know that God due recompense will give."

LIX.

Rush on, ye waters, with your message fraught
Of constant love and care of God ; rush on
Through lake and ocean, until ye have brought
Your message to the One whose love has shone
Through darkness on my life ; and bear from me
A message, too, of love and constancy.

Though far I roam from thee,
My fondest Love, my thought
To theeward constantly
By love's dear bond is brought.

Whate'er I hear or see,
If not thy voice or face,
Has interest for me
For but a little space.

And, whatso'er befall,
It little recks to me,
If it be not a call,
To summon me to thee.

My widowed spirit cries
Aloud for her twin-soul;
My heart in sorrow lies,
And needs thee to console.

Thus all my being faints,
And for thy presence pants;
In sorrowful complaints
It mourns our severance.

Then, dearest one, think not
That we shall never be
United—such a lot
Is not for thee and me.

And when at last we meet,
(As is our destiny),
In commune pure and sweet
We'll live eternally.

CANTO THE FIFTH.

I.

Around, both far and wide, on every hand
The prairie all environs me ; I see
Nought save a stretch of green and treeless land,
Conspicuous alone for nudity :
A sea of earth, a boundless stretch unspanned
Except by Heaven's broad horizon-band.

II.

The very vastness of its sameness lends
A fascination which it else had not ;
And here my sense of solitude transcends
What I have felt on any other spot :
Of solitude, yet not of loneliness,
For God seems present, and His distance less.

III.

The sea alone of Nature's works can vie
With this in solitude. None else can be
Compared to it. Here 'neath his Maker's eye
The creature seems to stand more openly
Than elsewhere. Here his very solitude
Makes man appear by God more nearly viewed.

IV.

Yet is not here God's awfulness displayed;
His kindliness and mercy more appear;
For flow'rs, the precious emblems He has made
Of graciousness, in plenitude are here.
In rich profusion blooming unconfined,
They seem to whisper softly: "God is kind."

V.

Yet break they not the solitude; nor can
The works of Nature break the solitude.
Man needs the presence of his fellow-man,
And ever needs it, whatsoe'er his mood;
Except when, in the hour he calls his own,
He holds communion with his God alone.

VI.

How vast this solitude! And yet 'tmay be
That, ere a decade's course is fully run,
This prairie, where no being I can see
Inhabiting, may be well built upon;
And even on this lonely stretch of ground
Surrounding me, a city may be found.

VII.

So rapidly have risen in the past
The cities in this Western land, that well
May we expect that not at all less fast
Shall future cities rise. And here may dwell
A population, whose increasing rate
Shall rival cities of an older date.

VIII.

I once had thought that I would choose to live
Upon the prairie-land. My youthful eyes
Raised here a mighty castle, which should give
A home to me and mine. To youth there lies
A fascination in the great Unknown,
Which some in old age have not yet outgrown.

IX.

Thus was I fascinated, and I thought
A prairie life, untrammeled, free and blest,
Much happiness to me had surely brought ;
And so I longed to roam the mighty West.
But kindly Fate forbade me then to roam,
Well knowing that the West was not my home.

X.

But now I stand upon the prairie, now
I see the land which once I longed to see—
And fain must smile, as I remember how
This land seemed once a paradise to me.
But that was ere my eye had ever seen
These thousand miles of treeless prairie-green.

XI.

Nay, this is not the prairie that I saw
In youth's mirage ; 'twas fairer far than this.
For youth's imagination knows no law,
And soars to heights of future-coming bliss,
In lands where gladness reigns eternally,
Too bright, too beautiful, alas ! to be.

XII.

For each his load of pain and woe must bear,
And each must feel the weight of Sorrow's hand,
And each will sometimes bow in deep despair,
And 'neath his burden think he cannot stand.
But strength will come to each in time of need,
For they whom grief destroys are few indeed.

XIII.

Thus youth's bright visions vanish all away,
And nought remains save memory. And we
Can calmly watch them thus dissolve, and say :—
"'Tis better thus ; 'tis best they should not be."
For Time has shown us, in his onward flight,
That all our visions were too grossly bright ;

XIV.

That, had the dreams we cherished come to pass,
We should not be the men that now we are ;
That what we saw through youth's bright distance-glass
Was but a trinket shining as a star ;
That selfish pleasure, with its gaudy gleams,
Alone illumed the brightest of our dreams.

XV.

And we have learned that 'tis not all to be
Self-seeking pleasure-hunters ; higher far
Are works of kindliness and charity
Which we can do, whate'er our frailties are.
And we have learned that pain and sorrow, though
Unwelcome guests, have each a work to do.

XVI.

And so we grieve or sorrow not to see
Our visions melt away like Winter's snow ;
But rather thank we all our God that He
Sent forth the edict that it should be so ;
And humbly bless, with gratitude sincere,
The hand that led us to a higher sphere.

XVII.

Farewell ! thou vast and fertile prairie-land.
Farewell ! Not long so dreary wilt thou be ;
Already man, with ever-busy hand,
Is cultivating and enriching thee ;
And with the wealth of this, thy virgin soil,
Thou well rewardest him for all his toil.

XVIII.

In cloudy height surrounding me, uprear
  The Rocky Mountains their uncounted heads.
And mountains, mountains only now appear,
  So thickly clustered that the sun but sheds
Upon their highest peaks his morning light,
While all below is hidden from his sight.

XIX.

Here rise their sky-aspiring pinnacles
  In barren ruggedness and majesty;
While here some verdure-covered height instils
  An awe less dread by its fertility;
And here again, a peak of snowy whiteness
Relieves the gloom and shadow by its brightness.

XX.

Each one a thing of grandeur, each alone
  Inspiring fearsome wonder in my soul,
What marvel that my being all is thrown
  Aghast in awe by this stupendous Whole?
What wonder that I stand in mute amaze,
Dumfounded by the scene whereon I gaze?

XXI.

My God, how wonderful Thy works appear !
How mighty art Thou, and omnipotent !
Before Thee, bending low in reverent fear,
I humbly bow. My human pride is bent.
Thou, Thou art God my awful Maker, I
Am helpless in my weak humanity.

XXII.

I hear the Psalmist's words again,* and now
Their fuller meaning bursts upon my soul ;
Thou madest all the earth and heaven, Thou
Dost hold the mighty seas within control ;
These lofty heights were form'd by Thy right-hand ;
Thou formedst all—all bow to Thy command.

XXIII.

And what is man to Thee ? He well may fall
Before Thee worshipping, when thus he sees
Thy vast creations. Weak indeed and small
Doth man appear before such works as these.
In meek humility I bend my knee
Before Thee. Lord, why thinkest Thou of me ?

* Psalm viii.

XXIV.

Yet why should all these wonders, thus arrayed
Before me, more command my reverence
Than man, the greatest creature God has made,
And chiefest pledge of His omnipotence?
Before the man these wonders fade away,
As pales the moon before the orb of day.

XXV.

For man is given a living, loving soul;
Man lives as other works of God live not;
He strives to reach a high and Heav'nly goal—
Incomparably higher is his lot.
God's greatest work, how fitly he should be
The one which most adores His majesty.

XXVI.

But each creation, when it first reveals
Itself to man, impresses him anew
With God's omnipotence, and so he feels
New cause for adoration in each view.
Himself though greatest, these creations each
Their own great lessons to his spirit teach.

XXVII.

And ye, great mountains, have your lessons, ye
Have mighty truths to teach the heart of man
Of God's omnipotence and majesty,
Which, if he will to learn from ye, he can.
But many blindly grope upon their way,
Refusing all the light of Nature's ray.

XXVIII.

A mountain tarn, with waters still and blue,
Here nestles, open to the heavens whence
It seemingly derives its azure hue.
Here, has this little tarn pre-eminence,
For 'mid such mighty works appearing less,
It must attract us by its littleness.

XXIX.

'Tis small; but, like the cloud that servant saw
Whose master bade him look for rain, it grows
To greater bulk; for hence the streamlets draw
Their first supplies; and each one onward flows,
With speed increasing, down the mountain side,
And rolls, a river, in the ocean tide.

XXX.

So great from little things evolve ; and as
Man looks upon this tarn and cannot see
The mighty river flowing hence, but has
To hear report of its immensity ;
So faith should teach him patiently to wait
While little things of life lead on to great.

XXXI.

But I must leave ye now ; I cannot stay,
Great mountains, in your midst. Regretfully
Must I be borne upon my Westward way,
And leave ye far behind me. Yet, should ye
No more delight my eye, it cannot be
That I shall e'er forget your majesty.

XXXII.

A quiet voice within me whispering,
Advises me to tarry not, nor spend
Unneedful hours in westward travelling ;
For peace awaits me at my journey's end.
Alas ! 'tis but the mountain solitude
That thus has calmed and soothed my weary mood.

XXXIII.

I would it *were* a voice intuitive
To say that all my suffering should be
Now swept away ; that henceforth I should live
In peace and quiet happiness ; that she
Whose love alone can shine upon my life
With healing light, could be my loving wife.

XXXIV.

Ah no! It cannot be. Such happiness
Is not for me. Yet will I haste me on
As best I may. Kind fortune yet may bless
The man on whom her smile has never shone.
No more I'll linger here, no more delay
My steps, but haste with speedy gait away.

XXXV.

With rapid flight I pass the mountains through,
Nor pause to rest upon my hurried way
Till, like a picture, burst upon my view
The unsung beauties of Vancouver's Bay.
Nor here I pause, and, onward speeding fast,
Victoria appears in view at last.

XXXVI.

Here Nature's gifts, all lavishly displayed,
Make this a spot most fair and beautiful.
Utopia's scene could here be fitly laid.
These wooded heights, these straits so clear and cool,
The distant mountains—In the poet's eyes
What, more than this, could be earth's Paradise?

XXXVII.

But beauties physical cannot combine
Alone to make an earthly Paradise;
But where the lamps of Love most brightly shine,
There, there the happiness of Heaven lies,
And bitter hatred, by its cursed spell,
Will make a very Paradise a hell.

XXXVIII.

I wander through the city; there is nought
Of beauty or attractiveness here shown.
Nature, and Nature only, here has brought
Adornment. But that little man has done
Which bare necessity compelled him do;
And nothing tasteful meets my weary view.

XXXIX.

I pass the city through, and onward, till
A pleasing view awakens me, I stray.
Here, standing on a high and wooded hill,
Imposing is the view that I survey.
Afar, across the straits, the mountains rise
In sunlit mightiness before my eyes.

XL.

So near they seem that I could almost be
There, at their feet, before the noon of day.
And yet I know the mountains, seemingly
So near, in truth are many miles away.
The air, so pure and undefiled, brings near
The view, which else far distant would appear.

XLI.

Thus is it with our cherished hopes. We see,
Not seeming far, a life of happiness
Before us ; and so close it seems to be,
That present grief and trouble pain us less
Than otherwise they would. More cheerfully
We bear our trials for their brevity.

XLII

But, as the days of pain roll slowly by,
And lengthen them to weary months and years,
And all our hopes of happiness still lie
Unfructified, these almost yield to fears;
And faith alone will give us strength to bear
Affliction's heavy scourge without despair.

XLIII.

Deep disappointment constantly renewed
Has weakened us; but still we hope to gain
That brighter life. But oh! if we'd reviewed,
At first, that life of long-continued pain,
We scarce had found the strength to struggle through
The path o'ershadowed with so dark a hue.

XLIV.

But each new day has brought a new-born hope,
Each night of rest has strengthened us anew,
And given us again the power to cope
With pain and trial; and we still pursue
Our way in faith, and day by day we cherish
The hope that on *that* day our pain will perish.

XLV.

Thus is it best that we should never know
What is to be, but walking in the path
Appointed, thank our God who made it so;
And daily forward press our way in faith
Unquestioningly, knowing well that He,
Who chose that path, is wiser far than we.

XLVI.

Upon the waters now the sun has poured
His morning light; each little ripple gleams
In joy because the day has been restored,
And dances lightly in its welcome beams.
And gladly, brightly on the wavelets go,
And musically murmur as they flow.

XLVII.

And as they flow they breathe upon the air
An odour strengthening, which had not been
Except the sea waves shone and glittered there.
No unbrined waters roll these hills between,
For, by their constant forth and backward motion,
They tell their kinship to the mighty ocean.

Roll, roll, great Pacific, roll !
Ten thousands of years with their joys and their fears,
Thy billows cannot control.
Still roll, Pacific, roll !

Toss, toss, great Pacific, toss !
For the hunter of seal, whose woe is thy weal,
And whose gain is thine only loss.
Still toss, Pacific, toss !

Foam, foam, great Pacific, foam !
On thy rock-bound coast the wild Indians boast
Thy mountains, not thee, their home.
Still foam, Pacific, foam !

Surge, surge, great Pacific, surge !
Though the mariners hear, with prophetical fear,
In thy surging their deathly dirge.
Still, surge, Pacific, surge !

Roar, roar, great Pacific, roar !
For the gold-hunter's breast is in wilder unrest
Than the billows that lash thy shore.
Still roar, Pacific, roar !

Moan, moan, great Pacific, moan !
For the Inca of old, with his treasures untold,
From Peruvian shores is gone.
Still moan, Pacific, moan !

Wave, wave, mild Pacific, wave !
On the light, sandy bar of thine islands afar,
In banana-tree grove is the old tale of love
Still told by the dusky brave.
Wave gently, Pacific, wave !

XLVIII.

I know not what it was that bade me seek
A letter from my Love. She promised not
To write to me, nor did I ever speak
Of that sad sorrow which would be my lot
In wandering alone and friendless here,
And hearing nought from her so fondly dear.

XLIX.

But some small quiet voice, scarce listened to,
Enforced by its importunate command
This tardy recognition, sooner due;
And having sought a letter, now I stand
And hold in trembling hands the paper she
Has held, and written on so daintily.

L.

To read her words beneath the public eye
Were desecration. I must seek a spot
Where I alone can commune quietly
With her, and where the vulgar gaze is not.
Then let me seek the free and open air,
And read my loved one's words of greeting there.

LI.

What writes my Love? Ah Love! thou hast been ill.
Dread fever laid thee low when I had gone,
And I was not beside thee—by his will
Except for whom thou now had'st been my own.
And, though he be thy father, may my curse
Rest on him; and I would I could do worse.

LII.

He, for his selfish pride to cause thee pain ;
He, for his littleness of mind to lay
Thee low in sickness ; God grant he may gain
His due reward. And may the Lord repay
The haughty baronet, in full degree,
For all the wrong that he has rendered thee !

LIII.

But now thou art recovered, now thy heart
Alone is sick. Ah Love ! thou mournest too,
No less than I, that we must live apart.
'Tis selfish, yet I thus would have thee do ;
I would not have thee happy while away
From me, sweetheart, thy love would else decay.

LIV.

And did'st thou think thy father would relent
Because thine illness threatened thee ? Ah ! no,
His stubborn pride would still remain unbent
Though thou at Death's dark portal layedst low.
His pride is greater than his love for thee,
And greater even than his hate for me.

LV.

We may not be united, loved one—Nay,
What writest thou? Ah Love! Love! is it true?
It cannot be that thou art mine to-day,
And wast before, the while I never knew.
Oh God! my God hear Thou thy servant's cry,
And let his thankful praise ascend on high.

LVI.

Mine eyes are dim—Nay, tears? It cannot be;
I am a man, and am not wont to weep.
Yet beats my happy heart so joyfully
The quick revulsion causes me to steep
Mine eyes in tears. Though Grief could not compel
These tears to flow, Joy bade them, and they fell.

LVII.

Nay, cease to flow, ye tears, for I must read
Those words again so full of promised joy.
So quickly read I, and such little heed
I paid to little words which might alloy,
Perchance, the whole, that I must read anew,
Those words, and know my rendering is true.

LVIII.

"The latest book you wrote has pleaséd well
The populace, and men of high renown
Upon its certain power for good all dwell;
And this has been so pleasing to the Crown
That, recognizing your unquestioned right,
The Queen has now created you a knight.

LIX.

"This pleases me, my dearest one, but, oh!
What follows gives me higher pleasure far
I quick resolved to let my father know
That you were now a knight, and, in a prayer,
With tearful eyes, I begged him to allow
My loved one to return and claim me now.

LX.

"When first I spoke he heeded not, but soon
His face relaxed, and then, 'The boy has won,'
He said, 'a worthy name. Then take thy boon,
And tell him I will call him now my son.'
Then, kissing me, he raised me from my knee,
And, smiling, bade me write in haste to thee."

LXI.

And thou *art* mine, my love—my very own!
And none can sever us. I seem not yet
To realize that all my pain is gone.
'Tis hard such heavy sorrow to forget.
Ah, Love! what now can give us grief or pain?
And who shall part us when we meet again?

LXII.

I donot love the title, and would choose
To bear it not; but this may never be.
The baronet would doubtless then refuse
To let his daughter be a wife to me,
And loud invectives on my head would pour.
He loves her, but he loves a title more.

LXIII.

But 'tis not mine to judge the baronet,
E'en though he shaded all my brighter life;
My duty bids me all the past forget,
For he has given me a loving wife.
So be it mine all passions to control,
And speed me home to greet my soul's twin-soul.

LXIV.

Then, farewell, Canada! If I have been
O'erladen with a heavy-burdened heart,
While all thy many beauties I have seen;
And if my sorrow should a vein impart
Of sadness to my thoughts, or bitterness,
Oh, think not this can make me love thee less.

LXV.

Farewell, great Canada! And oh! forgive
An exiled Englishman if he esteem
His native country highest, and would live
By choice in England. Do not let it seem
That on thy charms he sets but little store;
He loves thee well, but must love England more.

As boldly on high ye rise to the sky,
Great mountains, my message convey,
And tell to the Heaven the joy that is given
To me and to mine to-day.

Ye tall, waving trees, tell ye to the breeze,
And bid it to bear away
Afar on its wing, the words that I bring:
"My love is my own to-day."

And you, little bird, your voice must be heard;
Hum out to the flow'rs my lay.
As o'er them you hover, oh! say that I love her,
And say she is mine to-day.

And, oh! pretty flowers, put forth all your powers,
And tell to the bees that stray
Your blossoms among, the words of my song:
Oh! tell of my joy to-day.

And ye, busy bees, give heed to my pleas,
My loving request obey;
As ye fly to and fro, let your fellows all know
The joy that is mine to-day.

Let Nature all see my joy, and for me
Her many-tongued pow'rs array,
And bid them rejoice, and sing with one voice,
Because of my joy to-day.

THE END.

VISIONS.

VISIONS.

I.

THE NEW RESOLVE.

Last night, as I sat in my study,
And thought o'er my lonely life,
I was seized with a passionate longing
To escape from the weary strife;

To flee far away from my fellows,
And far from the city's roar,
And seek on the boundless prairie
A balm for my burning sore—

The sore of the weary spirit,
The burn of the aching heart
Of him who has known true friendship—
Has known it—but only to part.

And I said in that hour of anguish:
"I will fly from the haunts of men,
And seek, in the bosom of Nature,
Relief from my ceaseless pain."

As lonely I sat, and thus pondered,
A voice seemed to speak in my ear;
And the sound of that voice was like music,
And its accents were mellow and clear:

"Weary soul, though all men have forsaken,
Thy God hath remembered thee still;
The sorrow and pain thou hast suffered
Are part of His infinite will.

"Sorrow not, though He call thee to suffer;
Evade not His righteous decree;
Be faithful, and live uncomplaining
The life He has ordered for thee;

"For God is thine infinite Father,
His purpose is all for the best.
Fight bravely, for after the battle
He giveth thee comfort and rest."

And the sound of that voice was like music,
And its accents were mellow and clear ;
No longer I felt I was lonely,
For I knew that my Father was near.

And as I sat silent, and pondered,
My sorrow all vanished away ;
My strength was " renewed like the eagle s
And I longed for the breaking of day.

That again I might join in Life's battle,
And fight with a strength not my own,
Till my foes should be vanquished and scattered,
My enemies all overthrown.

For thus would I silence all scoffers,
And show them, by deed and by word,
How strong is the faith of a Christian,
How mighty the arm of the Lord.

II.

THE HIGHER DUTY.

I saw the sun. He shone in splendour bright,
Casting his radiance over dale and hill;
And all creation joyed to see his light:
He shone, and thus fulfilled his Master's will.

I saw the moon and stars. They gave their light
To guide the sailor o'er the trackless sea,
To show the traveller his path by night:
They shone, fulfilling all their Lord's decree.

I looked to earth, and saw the plants and trees,
Each growing fitly to the pattern made,
And yielding proper flowers and fruits. And these
All grew, and thus their Master's will obeyed.

I looked around, and saw my fellow-men,
Created by the same Almighty hand;
A higher destiny was granted them—
To rule the earth, obeying His command.

And, as I looked, the vision grew less bright,
And only through the darkness could I see
That, in their power and God-given might,
Men ruled, fulfilling half their Lord's decree.

Here was much chaos and confusion still;
And here no perfect concord seemed to be.
Each lived as best accorded with his will:
Men ruled, all heedless of their Lord's decree.

And, as I looked, deep sorrow filled my heart;
"Oh man!" I cried, "in God's own image made,
Shall sun, and moon, and trees, all do their part,
And thou alone fall short and retrograde?

"Thou—greatest of all God's created things!
Thou—ruler, by His order, of the earth!
Shake off thy sin, and, on aspiring wings,
Rise! and be worthy of thy glorious birth."

I cried; and from the darkness forth there came
A voice, which said in harsh and mocking tone:
"Dost thou possess so undefiled a name,
Art thou, amongst thy fellows, good alone,

"That thou shouldst vilify thy fellow-men?
Thou art not innocent nor free from guile—
Thou too art man. Go, nor return again,
Sinful, thy fellow-sinners to revile."

It ceased. But, as I turned to join the strife,
In milder accents spake that voice again:
"An humble heart, a pure and useful life—
And not vain words—will raise thy fellow-men."

III.

THE HIDDEN PURPOSE.

I was weary and faint with temptation and trial,
For the prayers I had made had but met with denial,
And the slow-coming doubt, which had once hardly found
In my heart a mean place, was now strong and profound.

And my soul was in anguish, for suffering keen,
And intense disappointment, too often had been
New prepared for my portion, till now, as I lay
By new sorrow re-stung, all my faith passed away.

Then a curse on my lips rose, and darkly I swore
That the God who had led me should lead me no more ;
His existence was doubtful, but, if He should be,
He had been but a God of vindiction to me.

So I vowed that henceforward the path that I trod
Should be chosen by me, and not ordered by God ;
And relief seemed to greet my resolve as I lay,
All in sleeplessness, waiting the breaking of day.

But as quiet I lay, and thought o'er my decision,
All my wakefulness passed, and I saw in a vision,
By my side standing closely, an Angel of Light,
Clothed in shining apparel resplendently bright.

And I lay there all trembling in fear as I lay,
Till with beckoning finger he led me away;
Then I rose and went forth in the darkness of night,
And, still trembling, I followed that Angel of Light.

And I followed him on till he paused in his flight
Where a Christian lay sleeplessly passing the night ;
And I heard him repeat as he lay on his bed,
" My paths are divided, Lord, which shall I tread ? "

And I saw that the one led to glory and fame,
While the other fulfilled not his heart-cherished aim ;
But the scales of mortality darkened his eye,
And the thing I saw plainly he could not descry.

Then the Angel breathed o'er him, and light seemed
to break
O'er his soul, and he saw then the path he should take.
Then his spirit was eased, and sweet sleep o'er him
came,
For he thought this would lead him to glory and
fame.

But I saw that the path he had chosen that day
Would lead him from glory and fame far away;
But I saw, too, that, were he not led in this path,
The love of the world would have shaken his faith.

For his pride, swelling high in the glory of gain,
Would have led him from God to things sinful and
vain.
But his trouble would lead him to God now for rest;
And I saw that the plan of his Maker was best.

Then the Angel went forth, and I followed him still,
Thus impelled by the force of his Heavenly will,
Till he stayed where two lovers stood breathing their
vows,
With the fondness that love and deep passion arouse.

Then he put forth his hand, and he pointed in wrath ;
And the fever-fiend rose with a horrible laugh.
But the man felt him not as he poisoned his blood,
And the woman saw nought as still smiling she stood

But I knew that that meeting was surely their last,
For the shadow of death on the man was now cast.
And my heart could but pity the woman, whose pain
I yet knew would redound to her infinite gain.

For deception and falsity deep in the heart
Of the man were writ large, and there truth had no part ;
And the pain of her mourning was nought when compared
With the agony he would have caused her, if spared.

Quickly onward then hasted the Angel of God,
And I still followed close in the steps that he trod ;
And I saw, when his flight was arrested again,
That we stood where an infant lay tossing in pain.

And the mother, with tear-laden eyes, kneeling there,
Sought relief from her trouble in heart-broken prayer,
As she cried unto God, in a piteous tone,
That He would not deny her the life of her son.

And the Angel himself breathed a sorrowful sigh,
And I thought that a tear glistened bright in his eye,
As he stretched forth his hand, and commanded the soul
Of the child to ascend to its Heavenly goal.

Then I heard a loud cry of distress on the air,
And I saw the lone mother lie grief-stricken there ;
And the tears of compassion flowed fast from my eyes,
Though I knew that God's action was kindly and wise.

For disease on the child had imprinted its stain,
And his life would have been but a long-endured pain,
Had his Father not early exerted His might,
And thus called the young soul to the Kingdom of Light.

Then the scene seemed to melt in the darkness away,
And again on the couch in my chamber I lay.
And the Angel of God by my side again stood ;
And he gazed on me sadly and said, "God is good."

Then I saw him no more, but with morn I awoke
And remembered the words that the Angel had spoke ;
And the scenes of the vision, repictured again,
Passed before me, and brought me a balm for my pain.

For I knew that my God had not called me in vain
To temptation and trial, and I would not complain;
But with gladness I went forth anew to the strife,
Knowing now that my Father was guiding my life.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE SERPENT.

Canada, the time approaches,
And is even now at hand,
When thou must declare what ruler
Thine allegiance shall command.

In thy midst there creeps a Serpent—
Deadliest of all thy foes—
Gliding in among thy councils,
Spreading venom where she goes.

Like the fatal boa-constrictor
Charming those who soon must die,
She can so transfix her victim
By the glitter of her eye,

That the greatest of thy statesmen
Dares not question her decree,
But in meek humiliation
Bows to her, abjuring thee.

Rise, Canadians! and boldly
Thrust the Serpent from your land;
And should any strive to help her,
Crush them with your martial hand.

Rise unanimous, and fear not
In your country's cause to fight;
Better bloodshed than surrender
To the wily Serpent's might.

Hurl from power the men who basely
Truckle to the Serpent's will;
Cast them out and call on others—
Truer men—their place to fill.

Men whose chiefest aim shall be to
Fight for Canada and home—
Men who will not bow before the
Dictates of the Church of Rome.

Canada, the time approaches,
And is even now at hand—
Wilt thou choose that Rome or England
Thine allegiance shall command?

PRO DEO ET PATRIA.

Silent yet fiercely the battle is raging;
Blood is not flowing, but poison is spread;
Freedom and slavery madly are waging
A war that will last till its cause shall be dead.

Canada, thine is the field of the battle,
Nor would the conflict be long or severe,
Were not thy statesmen, "like dumb, driven cattle,"
Led by emolument, daunted by fear.

Slowly advances the Jesuit faction,
Crafty and subtle the means they employ.
Protestants fight, but uncertain their action—
Party dissensions their power destroy.

Love of their country still loudly professing,
On to the conflict *divided* they go.
Firmest allegiance to Britain confessing,
Still *disunited* they fight with her foe.

Canada, these are the men who defend thee—
These the brave soldiers who fight in thy name:
Fierce is the struggle, but soon will the end be;
And Leo shall lead thee to glory and fame!

DESPONDENCY.

A Response to "Courage," by Celia Thaxter.

You have said that there is not a fear
Or a doubt that oppresses your soul,
  That your faith is so strong
  That it bears you along,
Ever holding you in its control.

'Tis a comfort to know there is one
Whose allegiance cannot be denied,
  But I fain would enquire,
  (For your faith is far high'r
Than is mine): Have you ever been tried?

Have you sought to aspire to a life
Higher far than the one that is past?
  Have you laboured through years,
  By your hopes crushing fears,
But to meet disappointment at last?

Have the friends who should love you the best,
In your absence forgotten that love,
  And refused to impart
  To your grief-stricken heart
All the solace their kindness would prove ?

Has the world misconstrued your intents,
And endeavoured to sully your fame?
  Has the venomous tongue
  With its calumny stung
Your proud heart, and dishonoured your name?

I desire not to "chide" you nor "vex,"
But I ask you to answer me now;
  Did the torturing pain
  Of a love that is vain
Ever furrow your heart like a plough?

Have you loved with so fervent a love
That, when failure and hopelessness came,
  All the torments of hell
  In your breast seemed to dwell,
Scorching courage and faith in their flame?

One of these may have fall'n to your lot;
What if all were apportioned to me?
  Could I then "lift my head,"
  Nor a single tear shed?—
Has such faith been allotted to thee?

I have sought to be true to my God,
I have sought to be faithful as you;
  But such "tumult and strife"
  Have embittered my life
That I am not so faultlessly true.

TO L. W.

When the path of my life
Lay through trouble and strife,
  And temptation encompassed me round,
As a light in the shade
Thou wast sent to mine aid ;
  And a harbour of refuge was found.

I beheld in thine eye,
As a beam from on high,
  The ray of compassion revealed ;
And I turned in relief
From the Valley of Grief ;
  I turned to be strengthened and healed.

In the words that you breathed
All my sorrow was sheathed,
  And peace, like a dove, settled down.
And the calm of your presence,
Like mercy's pure essence,
  Recaptured the faith that had flown.

Since then, if perplexed,
If harassed or vexed,
  If tempted, afflicted or tried,
I have sought thee to cheer,
Thou hast ever been near
  To comfort, to soothe and to guide.

Thus a thrill of affection
Must greet the reflection
  That thou hast considered my needs ;
And my heart can but move
With a reverent love
  As I ponder thy merciful deeds.

Though feeble and weak
Are the words that I speak,
  Such gratitude wells in my soul,
That I dare not express
What I fain would confess,
  Lest my pen should escape my control.

Yet these measures restrained
Will have surely attained
  The purpose that caused them to be,
If of all that I feel
They should chance to reveal
  But a hint, in a whisper, to thee.

YOU WRONG ME, KATE.

You wrong me, Kate, you wrong me
In harbouring the thought
That he who loves so fondly
Would injure thee in aught.
The pang that I must feel, Kate,
When dark suspicion lurks
Within thy breast, is real, Kate,
And mischievously works.

The tone with doubt inflected,
The calm, reproachful look,
The name of one suspected
In light arraignment spoke;
These, these enforce the heart-ache,
And instigate the strife,
And these, in chiefest part, take
The joy from out my life.

For bright within my soul, dear,
On Love's unsullied throne,
With absolute control, dear,
Thou reignest Queen alone.
With reverence I chose thee,
With pride I placed thee there ;
And none did e'er oppose thee,
And none shall ever dare.

All womankind shall merit
A just regard from me,
And all the sex inherit
A claim to courtesy ;
But none has ever claimed me
Her vassal, slave or thrall,
For Kate, my heart has named thee
The sceptred Queen of all.

Then trust me, Kate, oh ! trust me,
In absence, far or near,
And judge me not unjustly,
But hold my promise dear.
Will not my word content thee ?
I cannot give thee more :
Oh Kate, my Kate, repent thee,
And love me as before !

FLOSSIE.

I know a maiden, scarce thirteen,
A sweet and gentle maid,
With dignified and graceful mien,
And manner calm and staid.
But I've seen her, when none but her parents are nigh,
When her spirits are flowing exuberantly,
With her feet tossing high, while her arms in accordance,
Are wildly upraised in the Fling or the Sword-dance.

I know a maid whose hazel eye
Outshines the light gazelle's,
And hid beneath its brilliancy,
A pensive shadow dwells.
But I've seen it illumed with a mischievous light,
Which the sparkles displayed in the meteor's flight
Cannot meet, as her laughter reverberates round,
And merrily echo responds to the sound.

I know a maid whose accents mild,
And words of sober sense,
Declare her woman more than child,
Yet mark her innocence.
But I've heard her repeating the quip or the joke,
While merriment shone in her eyes as she spoke,
As, with skill that is seldom excelled on the stage,
She worthily mimicked the actor or sage.

I know a maid, a loving maid,
Whose quiet, gentle ways,
In look, in voice, in act displayed,
Must bring her love and praise.
But I know that when nimbly she's tripping the dance,
When her eyes sparkle bright with a mischievous glance,
When her sallies of innocent wit shall outpour,
She will capture the hearts that were callous before.

TO ETHEL.

So you think you will be a Scotch lassie ;
The braw Hieland lad in a kilt
Has taken your fancy, dear, has he ?
And you, too, would be clad in a "tilt."

Well, not one will gainsay you nor blame you,
For your wishes are ever fulfilt ;
And how proudly your father will claim you,
When arrayed in a tartan and "tilt"!

And your mother will certainly further
The hopes that her Ethel has built ;
You have only to ask to ensure their
Fulfilment concerning the "tilt."

And I—(Oh ! I know I don't count, dear,
And for speaking acknowledge my guilt,
For my wishes to nothing amount, dear,)
I would rather you hadn't a "tilt."

For although thou wilt take us by storm, dear,
Looking sweet, as thou certainly wilt,
Yet, you know, it is very bad form, dear,
And not English to wish for a "tilt."

And I thought, (but of course was mistaken,
For my hopes lie around me all spilt),
That my Ethel would never awaken
To sigh for a Hielander's "tilt."

None the less will I try to be glad then,
Nor let courtesy play me the jilt ;
Though I know that my heart will be sad when
Little Ethel is wearing her "tilt."

DEAR LITTLE ETHEL.

Dear little Ethel,
  Child that I love,
Come, as an angel,
  Down from above.

Golden-rayed tresses,
  Shining and bright,
Inviting caresses,
  Mirroring light.

Eyes blue and tender,
  Beaming with joy.
Who would offend her?
  Who would annoy?

Ripple thy laughter!
  Bubble thy glee!
Loud will the rafter
  Echo to thee.

Clinging to mother,
Set on her knee ;
She has no other
Dearer than thee.

Slave thou hast bound her ;
Nestles thine arm,
Twining around her,
Telling thy charm.

Innocent speeches
Silencing strife ;
Hallowed each is :
Pearls of a life.

Come, come and kiss me,
Child of my heart.
Oh ! I would miss thee
Were we to part.

God in His mercy
Shelter my dove,
Dear little Ethel,
Child that I love.

TO D. R. P.

(In imitation of A. Lindsay Gordon.)

Well, Douglas, I'm sorry you've got to be homing,
Though I grant it's unwise to continue your roaming,
But the evening's to spare ere you drop me astern,
So come up to my room and indulge in a yarn.

Here's tobacco in plenty—"Gold Flake," very good;
No "Birdseye," or "Honeydew," that's understood.
But this isn't bad, though a stranger to you—
(Here is Dick: Bring up ginger and whiskey for two).

And now take a seat, there are two, as you see,
The red rocker for you and the other for me.
Don't demur, for no guests will arrive, I am sure;
If they do, why there's room on the bed or the floor.

So you're going to England again. Well, your visit
Has nigh made me homesick—no miracle, is it?
I was born there, and there I was nurtured and bred,
And I love the old land. (There's a match overhead).

It is four years ago, more than that, since I started
Away from my home. Well, I'm not chicken-hearted,
But your accent, your manner, the things you have said,
Have just taken me back to the life I once led.

And it seems there's a canker that Time will not heal,
Though I certainly thought that I never should feel
Its soreness again. I had settled down here,
Thinking happiness mine, till your lordship drew near.

And now, with your talk of the land of my birth,
All those sad recollections you rudely unearth.
Don't apologise, man, for I'm glad it is so,
There's a joy in the grief that I wouldn't forego.

There's a joy in remembering all that has been,
And recalling the pleasures that once I have seen;
And if bitterness follows, I'm ready to suffer,
For this morsel is sweet though the next may be tougher.

Let the fool in his folly anticipate sorrow,
I, for one, will refuse to take thought for the morrow.
There is joy in our life if we will but enjoy it ;
But the most of us do what we can to destroy it.

For we fume and we worry and fret ourselves thin
By regret for what might be or what might have been ;
And the blessings of life we incessantly miss
By ignoring entirely the pleasure that is.

You have taught me a lesson ; though little you thought
Or intended to do it, the lesson is taught.
By your actions, not words, have I learned to be wise,
To embrace every joy, every sorrow despise.

Did I say that I *thought* there was happiness here ?
I was wrong, for I *know* it ; 'tis perfectly clear.
If you'll listen a bit, take your pipe up again
And continue your smoke, I will try to explain.

To begin with, the land I've adopted as mine
Has a place in my heart, a peculiar shrine.
And my love for the country is true and sincere ;
If I can't live in England I wish to live here.

Then, I freely confess, if my way has been hard,
And my path somewhat rough, still I have my reward.
Let my rung on life's ladder be low as it may,
I have fought single-handed each step of the way.

It is well to have fortune, mayhap it is well
In the tents of the noble and titled to dwell ;
But the man who has builded his home with his hand
Is the happiest man in the happiest land.

Let milord and milady inherit their wealth,
I am legatee only of vigor and health ;
Every cent that I own has been earned by the sweat
Of my brow, and I'm proud to acknowledge it yet.

There's a happiness here every other beyond,
Except one : to be bound in the mystical bond
Which is woven with throbs of the heart that is true,
And the glances of eyes of a love-lightened hue.

And, perchance, even I may have tasted the bliss
That is found in the warmth of the soul-inspired kiss;
And it may have been mine—But I travel too fast.
It is time that the cobbler returned to his last.

But your silence has been philosophic and deep,
And I hope you've enjoyed—why, the man is asleep!
Only closing your eyes? Well, perhaps that will do
To tell the marines, but it's grossly untrue.

I was speaking of England? Undoubtedly so,
So I was, but it's just twenty minutes ago.
I've been talking since then in a serious strain,
And perhaps 'tis as well that I've spoken in vain.

Don't apologise. What, is it time for your train?
Well, Douglas, then here's to our meeting again
And meanwhile, old man, don't forget the pedantic
And long-winded fellow across the Atlantic.

CHRISTMAS

'Tis Christmas day ; the bells ring out
The joyous tidings far and near,
And children hail with gladsome shout
The merry sound of Christmas cheer.

'Tis Christmas day, the children's day,
When He was born a little child,
To take Creation's sin away,
And purify the Truth defiled.

He taught the world to walk by faith,
And, lest their feet should go astray,
He trod Himself the faithful path,
And showed His followers the way.

He taught a Hope to all oppressed
By Sorrow's weight or Sin's remorse ;
Himself the contrite sinner blessed,
To give His words a greater force.

Oh! ye who tread in Trial s way,
Nor scarce can murmuring resist,
Remember, on His natal day,
The faithful suffering of Christ.

And ye, whose thoughts in memory trace
A darkened life of wrongful deeds,
Look up and see His kindly face,
Who now for your allegiance pleads.

Oh! Christians, to your name be true,
Cast all your faithlessness away,
And let your hope be born anew
On this, your Saviour's natal day.

A SERENADE.

From afar, in the dead of night,
By the moon's dim, uncertain light,
To salute thee with loving rite,
I come, sweetheart, I come.

Oh ! refuse not to hear my lay ;
From the depths of my soul I pray.
Let my accents my love betray
To thee, sweetheart, to thee.

As I sing in the shade below,
As the words of my greeting flow,
I am thrilled with the fervent glow
Of love, sweetheart, of love.

I have come from the silent moor,
In the still of the midnight hour ;
I have come by my passion's power
For thee, sweetheart, for thee.

Then awake from thy slumbers light ;
Ere he speed on his homeward flight,
Bid thy lover a last good-night.
Good-night, sweetheart, good-night !

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